

Roanoke, Town of
(M.E. Whelan Office)
Roanoke
Lewis County
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-209-E

HABS
WVA,
21-ROAN,
6-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ROANOKE, TOWN OF
(M.E. Whelan Office)

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Location: Roanoke, West Virginia

UTM Coordinates: Zone: 17 Easting: 543880 Northing: 4309080

U.S.G.S. Map: Roanoke, West Virginia, 7.5' (1966 edition, photo revised 1979)

Present Owner: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Present Use: vacant.

Construction date: pre-1880

Informants: James Whelan, Bonnie Hawkins Fultineer .

Historical Information:

Adjacent to the M.E. Whelan House (HABS No. WV-209-D) is a one story frame structure that was used for many years by Dr. Whelan as his office. Shortly after Whelan came to Roanoke ca. 1872, he apparently slept in the rear room of the two room structure, although his son, James "Doc" Whelan, has said that he dined at the White Hotel next door. The 1880 U.S. Census schedules also indicate that he boarded somewhere in Roanoke. The small structure may have been extant when he bought lots 15 and 16 from Joseph Hall in 1882. After Whelan's house was constructed, the rear room of the office was used principally for storage, although the doctor apparently did maintain a bed there which he occasionally used for resting (James Whelan 1981, pers. comm.).

In the 1930's, after the death of Doctor Whelan, the office was converted into a rental dwelling by his widow, Ella. Gas and electricity were installed by James Whelan in ca. 1935. He later covered the walls with drywall during the 1940's, but the structural integrity of the office remained basically unchanged.

For project information and bibliography, see ROANOKE HABS No. WV-209.
For other structures in the Roanoke area, see HABS No.s WV-209-A -S.

The report from which this HABS documentation was prepared, along with field notes and over 90 hours of interview tapes, will be archived at the University of West Virginia, Morgantown, West Virginia.

Architectural Information:

General Description: The M. E. Whelan physician's office is a one story three bay rectangular frame (clapboard siding) structure with a gable roof not dissimilar in appearance to certain "rural stores" described by Pulliam and Newton 1973. The southeast elevation has a shed roof porch, and there is a crude frame porch on the northwest elevation.

Exterior Description

Overall Dimensions: 15 1/2' x 24'.

Foundation: The foundation consists of wooden piers formed from stacks of three variable-sized wooden blocks which in turn rest on blocks of sandstone; the piers are located at each corner of the structure with an additional pier centered along the northeast and northwest walls.

Walls: The walls are composed of 5 1/2" clapboard; there are corner boards, and the building is constructed with cut nails; painted white.

Framing: This is composed of light timber frame 2" x 5" studs on 2' centers; squared log sills.

Porch: A 6'1" x 14'1" porch is centered in the southeast elevation.

The deck, which is raised 1'1 1/2" above ground and is attached to wooden joists, is of 1/2" thick plywood painted medium gray. The deck is supported by three evenly-spaced piers consisting of a concrete block laid horizontally with a single brick laid horizontally atop it. The shed roof is supported by three 4" x 4" columns composed of a pair of 2" x 4" boards nailed together and is covered with rolled roofing. The porch is 1' above ground level.

Another porch is centered on the door in the northwest elevation.

This porch measures 4'5" wide x 10'5" long, and the deck is 1'8" above the ground. The deck is formed from 4 1/2"-7" unpainted plain boards on wooden joists and is supported by two piers consisting of a single brick resting on a block of sandstone. The shed roof is covered with tarred sheet metal. The porch is enclosed with a mixture of various types and sizes of boards. Height varies from 6'7" to 7'9 1/2". The porch has a 2'9" x 6'4 1/2" screen door. Access to the northwest porch is from a sandstone step that measures 3' in width x 11" tread x 6 1/2" rise. The step rests on a sandstone landing that measures 17" x 45".

Chimneys: There is a brick chimney centered on the roof peak .

Roof: The roof is a medium-pitch gable variety covered with slate partially laid in a decorative, scale-like pattern which matches that used in the Whelan House. Eaves and raking trim consist of boxed cornice with a frieze board.

Interior Description: Room 1 (room numbers are keyed to floor plan on page 11)

Function: Unknown.

Dimensions: 13'8" x 14'; 9' ceiling.

Wallcovering: drywall painted white; 1'9" wainscoting of particle board painted dark brown.

Floorcovering: 5 1/2" plain boards; central area of room covered with linoleum; area beyond linoleum is painted maroon.

Ceiling: 4 1/2"-6" boards; narrow cove molding around edges of ceiling; painted white.

Baseboard: 4 3/4" plain board; painted white.

Heating: gas connection on north wall between chimney and door.

Fireplace: stove connection in brick chimney.

TABLE
Tract 1516 (office): Door Details

Position	Opening	Style	Hinge	Latch/Lock	Interior Surround Trim	Exterior Surround Trim	Threshold
Room 1 to Exterior	2'7 7/8" x 6'7"	4 panel	3" butt	4 3/8" x 3 1/8" rim lock; porcelain knobs; sliding bolt on interior; hasp on exterior	2 1/2" plain boards	2" plain boards	yes
Room 1 to Room 2	2'7 1/4" x 6'9 3/8"	passageway			2 1/2" plain boards	4" plain boards	no
Room 2 to Exterior	2'9" x 6'3 3/4"	6 board (5 1/2") and 2 batten	3" butt	4 3/8" x 3 1/8" rim lock; sliding bolt on interior; previously a thumb latch	4" plain boards with bevel toward door opening	2" plain boards	yes

TABLE
Tract 1516 (office): Window Details

Position	Style	Opening	Size of Pane	Number of Panes	Type of Sill	Interior Surround Trim	Exterior Surround Trim
SOUTHEAST WALL Left to right	double hung	28 1/2" x 63"	12" x 28"	2/2	slip	2 1/2" plain boards	1 3/4" plain boards
	double hung	28 1/2" x 63"	12" x 28"	2/2	slip	2 1/2" plain boards	1 3/4" plain boards
SOUTHWEST WALL Left to right	double hung	28 1/2" x 63"	12" x 28"	2/2	slip	4" plain boards with half bevel toward opening	1 3/4" plain boards
	shutter composed of 5 boards (5 1/2") width and "Z" batten; hung on 6" strap hinges						
NORTHEAST WALL Left to right	double hung	28 1/2" x 63"	12" x 28"	2/2	slip	4" plain boards with half bevel toward opening	1 3/4" plain boards
	shutter composed of 5 boards (5 1/2") width and "Z" batten; hung on 6" strap hinges						

Plumbing: none.

Lighting and Electricity: central suspended ceiling fixture with pullcord; switch attached to door jamb on southeast wall; duplex outlet on southeast wall adjacent to doorway.

Interior Description: Room 2

Function: Unknown.

Dimensions: 9'3" x 13'11"; 9' ceiling.

Wallcovering: drywall painted white; 1'9" wainscoting of particle board painted dark brown.

Floorcovering: 5 1/2" plain boards; central area of room covered with linoleum; area beyond linoleum painted maroon.

Ceiling: 4 1/2"-6" plain boards; narrow cove molding around edges of ceiling; painted white.

Baseboard: 6 3/4" plain board with 1/2" bevel along top edge; painted white.

Heating: none.

Fireplace: none.

Plumbing: cold water sink and drain is along west wall.

Lighting and Electricity: central suspended ceiling fixture with pullcord; switch on southeast wall adjacent to doorway; duplex outlet attached to window jamb on northeast wall.

Site:

General Setting and Orientation:

The Dr. M. E. Whelan office building is situated along the western side of the Whelan property ca. 18' back from West Virginia County Route 23/5 (the old Weston and Gauley Bridge Turnpike); it sits between the Whelan dwelling (see above) and Tract 1517 (see below) which at one time had been the site of the Roanoke, West Virginia, post office (Oliver Posey 1981, pers. comm.). The structure faces southeast.

Historic Landscape Design: A large walnut (*Juglans* sp.) tree grows at the east corner of the property.

Outbuildings: none at present



General view of the M. E. Whelan office (right) in 1981 looking generally west.



Southeast elevation of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981. Note the single remaining shutter on the window at left. Barge boards originally graced this elevation



Southeast and southwest elevations of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981.



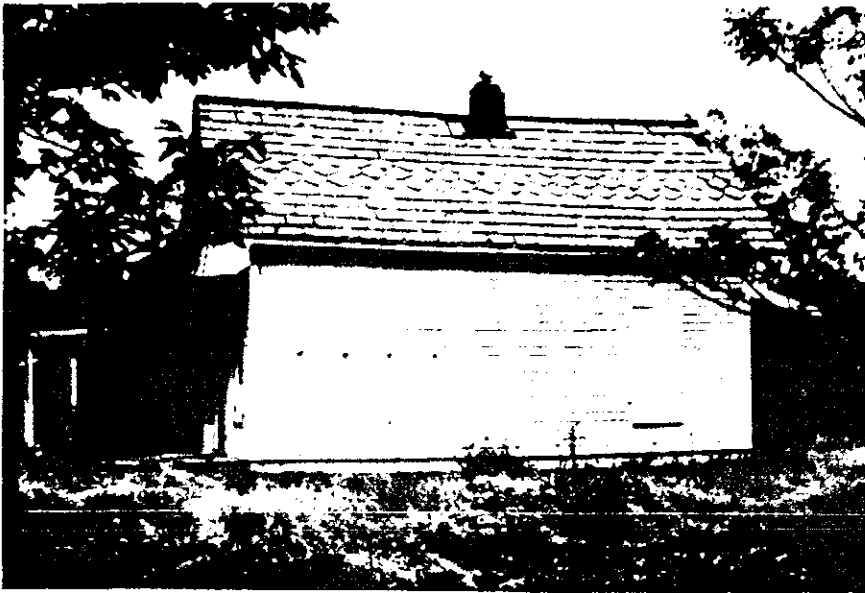
Southwest and northwest elevations of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981.
Note the crude porch on the northwest elevation.



The northwest elevation
of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981.



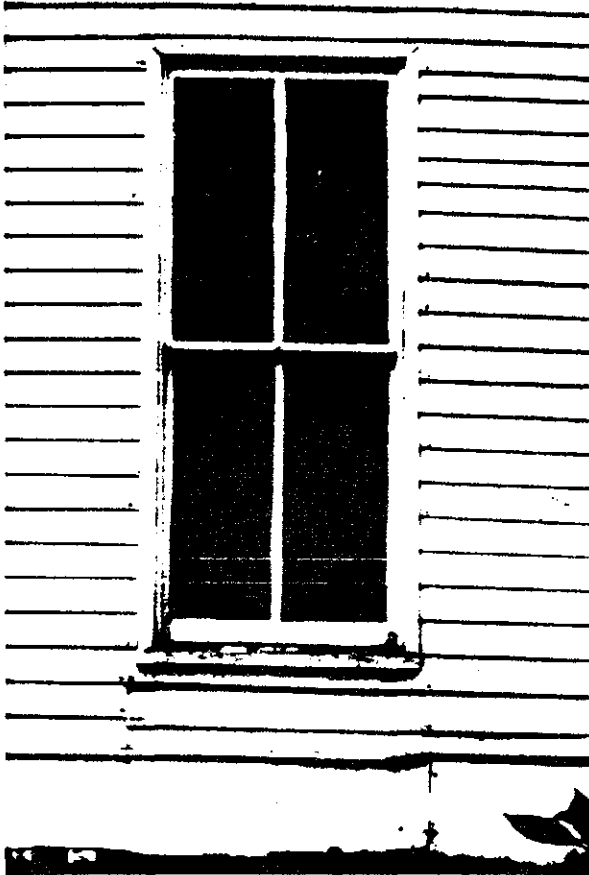
The northwest and northeast elevation of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981.



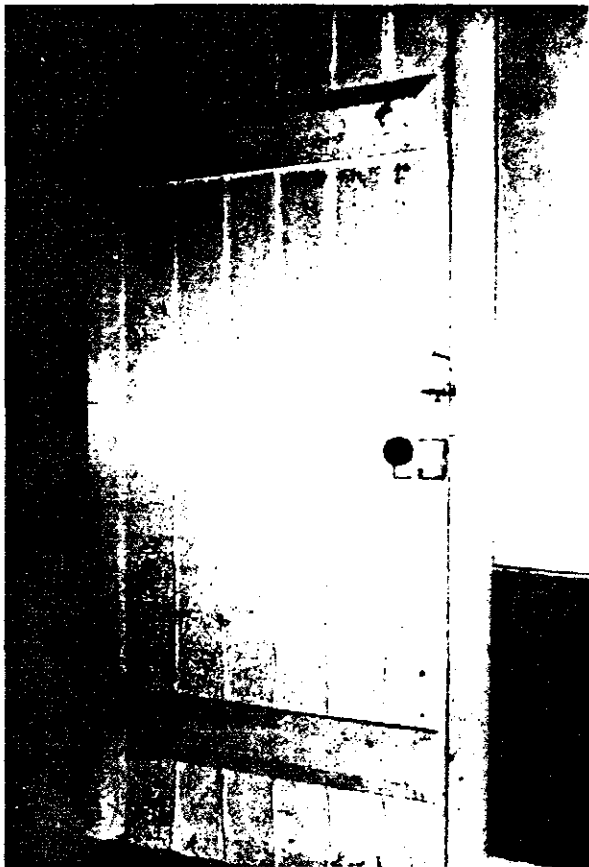
Northeast elevation of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981. Note the shuttered window at right as well as the decorative slate roof.



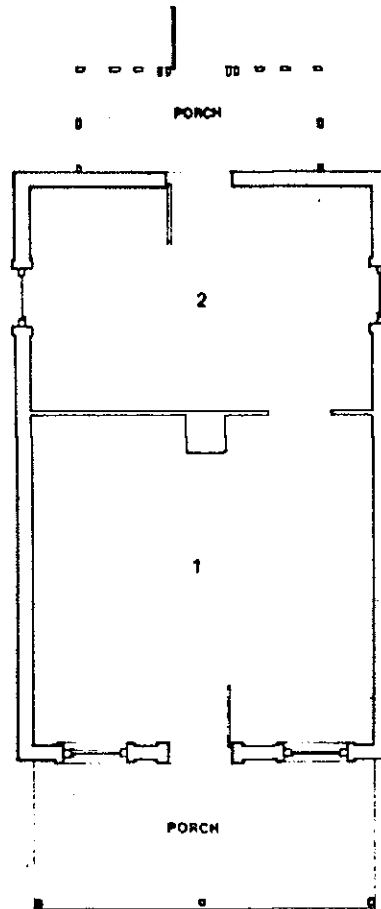
Northeast and southeast elevations of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981.



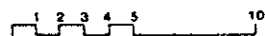
Close-up of 2/2 double hung sash window in the southwest elevation of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981. This window is typical of those in the structure.



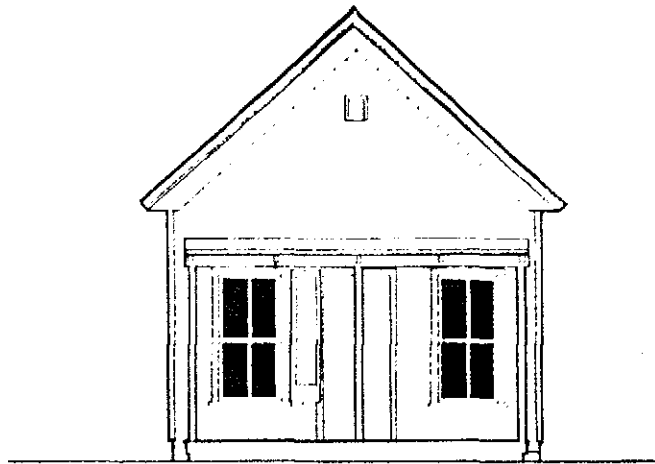
Close-up of Room 2 to exterior board and batten door in the northwest elevation of the M. E. Whelan office in 1981.



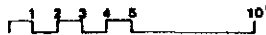
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



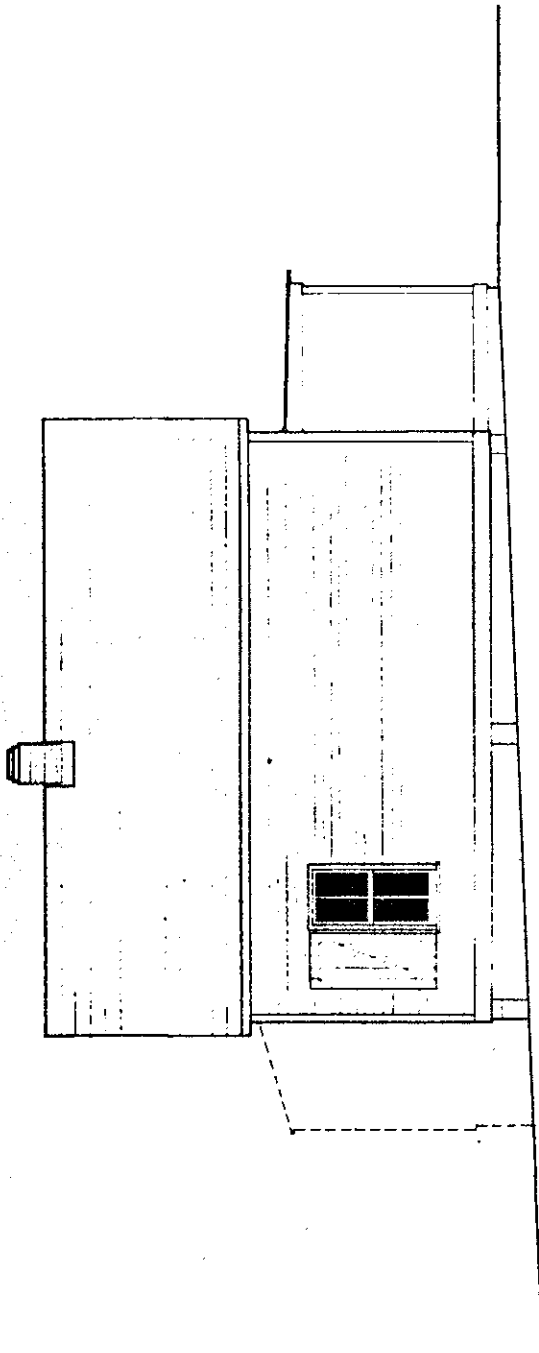
Floor plan of the M. E. Whelan office.



SOUTHEAST ELEVATION



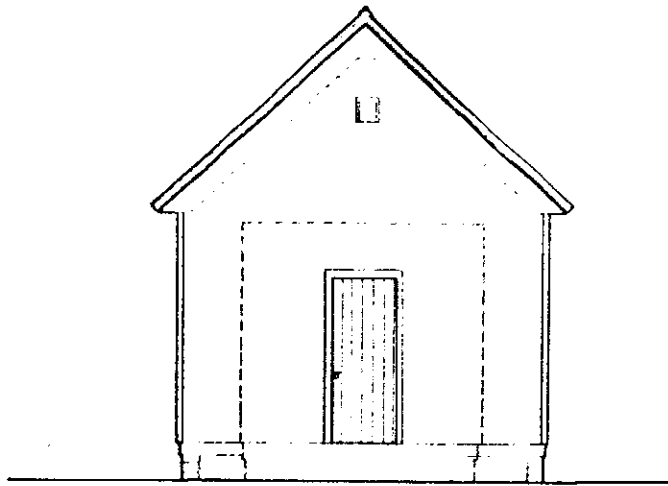
Southeast elevation of the M. E. Whelan office.



SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

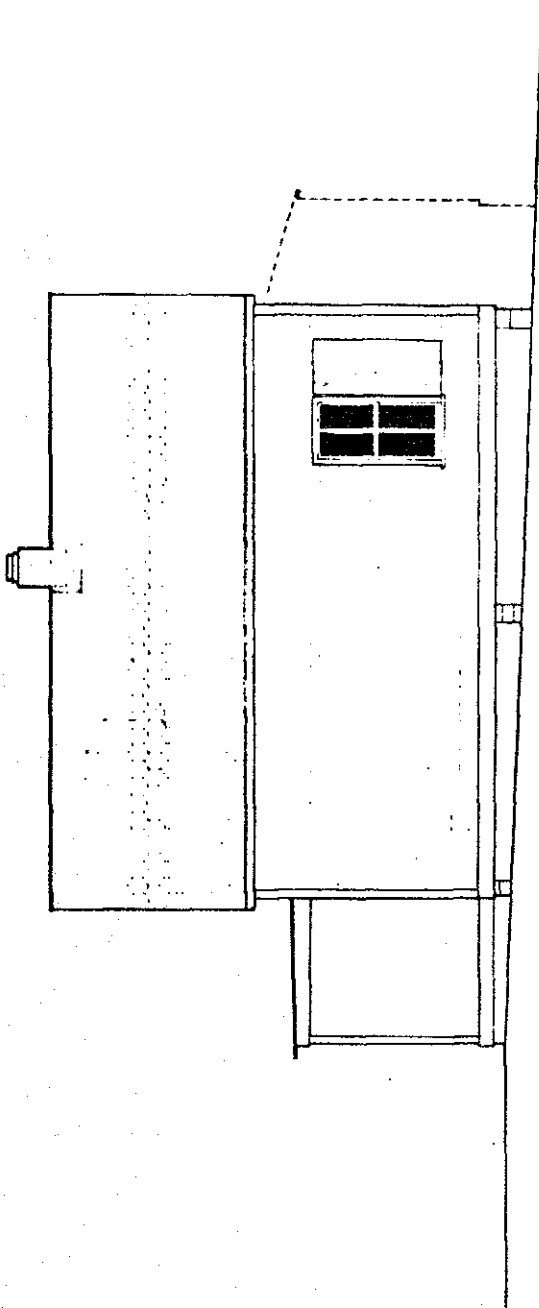


Southwest elevation of the M. E. Whelan office.



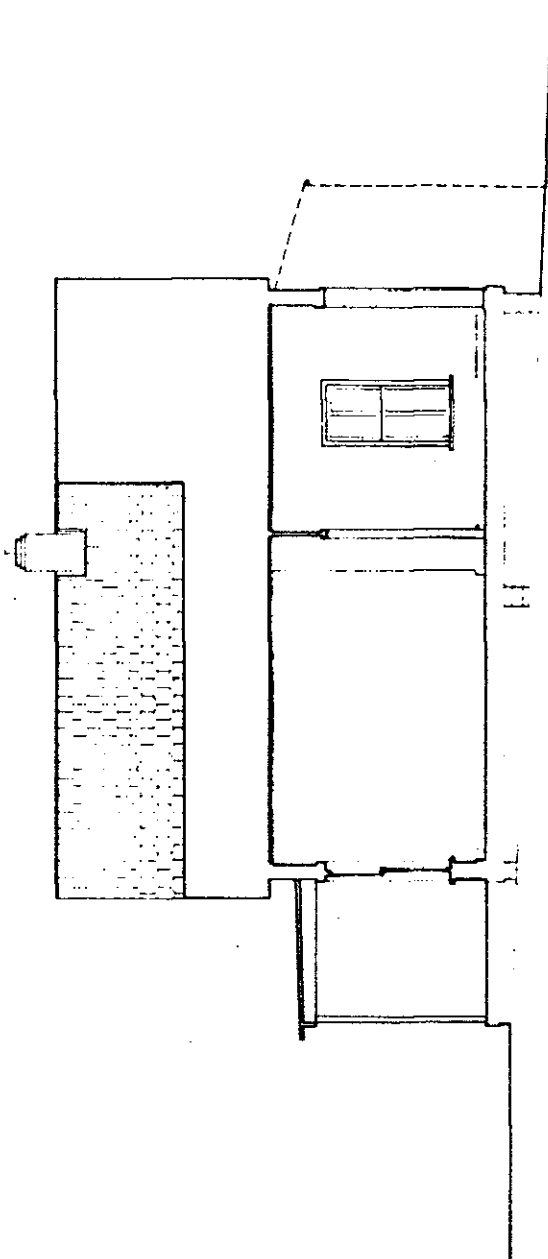
NORTHWEST ELEVATION

Northwest elevation of the M. E. Whelan office.



NORTHEAST ELEVATION

Northeast elevation of the M. E. Whelan office.



SECTION A-A



Longitudinal section (A-A) through the M. E. Whelan office.